



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH**

*PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990*

December 7, 2005

**TO:** Washington State Board of Health Members

**FROM:** Dr. Charles Chu, Chair, Children's Health and Well Being Subcommittee

**SUBJECT: VISION SCREENING**

**Background and Summary**

In April 2005, the Legislature enacted Substitute House Bill 1951. It requires the Department of Health (DOH) to convene a work group to reevaluate visual screening of children in public schools and make any recommendations regarding changes to the rules. In developing its recommendations, the work group must consider, at a minimum: (1) the benefits of complete eye exams on public school children, (2) when visual screening, complete eye exams, or both should take place in preschool or kindergarten through high school to ensure children are prepared to learn, and (3) what screening techniques would be appropriate in a school setting. The bill states that DOH should produce a report in consultation with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Board, the Optometric Physicians of Washington, and the Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons.

The work group is required to make a preliminary report to the Legislature and the Board by December 1, 2005. Final recommendations are due to the Legislature and the Board by December 1, 2006.

The work group has met three times to date. It comprises representatives from DOH, the Board, OPSI, the School Nurse Organization of Washington, pediatric ophthalmology, and pediatric optometry. It has produced a preliminary report and submitted it to the Legislature. Today, I have invited Beth Siemon from DOH to present the preliminary report to the Board and to discuss the progress of the work group.

**Board Action Recommended**

None.